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Issue #7

The Crazy Wisdom Weekly



Lynn Sipher, mindfulness instructor


shining a light in the dark
Published by the *Crazy Wisdom Community Journal* during the Pandemic.

The Crazy Wisdom Weekly

Long in the Tooth

By Bill Zirinsky

This pandemic is getting long in the tooth. I know most people are suffering way worse than we are, cocooned in our Ann Arbor haven. But, still, it is time for it to be over, but it is not. Today, we had to break the news to our 12-year old, Grace, that the YMCA's Camp Algonquian has been cancelled for this summer. Grace was going to attend with five girls she has been pals with since kindergarten. And the city pools will be closed, too.

Crazy Wisdom Bookstore has been closed for almost ten weeks now. Beginning to feel like we will never re-open our wonderful store -- 38 years old, humming with life, deeply interwoven in the Ann Arbor community. When Jon Ellis and I bought it from Aura Glaser, in early 1989, it was a tiny store, exquisite and special, an oasis, or as Jon said at the time, "an energy vortex" in the city. That was a long time ago, I was 35, now I am 66. That next year, my future wife, Ruth Schekter, moved from Little Italy in lower Manhattan to Ann Arbor, to live with me. She immediately began working at the store, buying and displaying the lovely jewelry and crafts and Buddhist statuary and Jane Iris goddess pendants.

Ten years later, we moved to Main Street, to the building at 114 South Main that we had bought and renovated. We added a tearoom, and live music, poetry and storytelling nights, witches' nights out, and intuitive readers. Meanwhile, we all got older. Two of our managers, Sarah Newland and Carol Karr, have been with us for 27 and 24 years, respectively. Lori Fithian has done drum circles at the store since we moved to Main Street, and Rebecca Williams has done Tarot readings for almost 20 years. Over 2000 live music nights, 90 faerie teas, dozens of book events, and literally thousands of classes and talks have occurred in our Community Room.

And now the pandemic comes along, at the same time as I have been wishing to relinquish the responsibilities of running a retail business open 360 days of the year, 10-12 hours a day. (Ruth had already moved back from the store, to take care of our kids. We have had four.) So, what to do? We shall see.

What I notice is that the pandemic is proving to be a liminal stage for many people. A threshold. Hard to see the end of this pandemic period. Hard to see the horizon beyond. The most life-altering event we have lived through. Many graces in daily life, much beauty in neighborhood walks, and sweet closeness in sheltering at home with my family. Still it is hard to see the light beyond.

Bill Zirinsky is the Editorial Director and Publisher of The Crazy Wisdom Journal*, and he and his wife, Ruth Schekter, have owned Crazy Wisdom Bookstore since 1989.*

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Please read our parent publication, *The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal*. You can find online archives on our website, crazywisdomjournal.com. *The Crazy Wisdom Journal* has been published three times a year since 1995.

Thank you to our contributors for this issue:

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Barbara Newell
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Because of Covid-19, we didn't publish our usual springtime *Crazy Wisdom Community Community Journal* in mid-April. (We will publish our fall issue right on schedule.) But in the meantime, we thought we'd create a weekly online version—short, and lively, and perhaps a mild distraction for our local and regional readership. We welcome articles, interviews, recipes, wisdom, personal essays, breathing exercises, favorite places for socially distant walks, news of your dogs, whatever. Send your submission to Jennifer@crazywisdom.net.



By Pauline Loewenhardt

Any activity that takes me outdoors is at the top of my list of pleasures. Just sitting on my little patio in the evening is pleasantly meditative and relaxing. I sit in a comfortable old wooden rocker and watch the birds pecking at my feeders, or darting about in the trees, and feel grateful for all my blessings. I watch with pleasure as fireflies come out and dot the dusk with their mysterious, blinking lights. The older I get, the more intense the pleasure of being in nature. However, I'm still not sure how my love of nature and the outdoors developed.

I was born and raised in Detroit, so my first taste of the outdoors was our shady street on the city's near west side. In those long-ago days, huge elm trees created graceful green arches over the streets, sidewalks, and porches. My younger brothers, my sister, and I played outside every day. There was an empty field at the end of our block where the neighborhood gang played tag, cowboys and indians, and built forts.

As we got older, we walked a few blocks up to Oakman Boulevard where the Wonder Bread Bakery stood. Behind this building, which still stands today, a little creek provided wonderful adventures as we waded and splashed in the water. More than once we brought home a bucket of tadpoles. We really thought we could grow them into frogs on our back porch and were sad when they all died.

In those days, Mama always had a backyard garden. She canned fruits and vegetables and made wonderful peach jam from a tree in our yard. I didn't know it then, but I would emulate her, and become a devoted gardener in later life.

Now, in the new century, life has ground to a virtual halt in many ways, but even as we are advised to shelter in place, it's fine to be outdoors for needed fresh air and exercise. Thank the Goddess for that! I have started walking at Argo two or three times a week as I find it soothing and refreshing to be near the river that conveniently runs through our town.

I have fond memories of this place. In 2009, my Dutch cousin, Louise, her husband, Carel, and daughter, Wendela, visited me in Ann Arbor. We held a gigantic picnic at this very shelter on Memorial Day for many friends and family as none of us had homes large enough for a crowd. Everyone had a good time, including the children, and many in the group went canoeing or kayaking. Louise had brought gifts of bright blue and orange face paint and arm bands, the colors of the Netherlands Soccer Team, and soon all the kids and many of the adults were adorned with the bright colors. These sweet memories rise up each time I visit Argo.

Earlier this April we had some nice warm days and walks were pleasant and many people were out walking, running, and biking. There were children of all ages and lots of dogs, too. At times I walked with a friend or family member, other times alone. At the end of one walk on a fine warm sunny afternoon, I laid down on the bench facing the water, near the shelter.

It felt wonderful to feel the warm sun on my face. Budding branches delicately waved over my head and myriad sounds filled the air. Birds were singing! The happy sound of a baby babbling nearby filled me with such pleasure that I almost wept. I realized that families with small children were not limited in giving and receiving hugs and kisses, as most of the rest of us are. I briefly considered whether I would choose to relive those days of raising a family of three children. Even if possible, I don't think I would want to do that. I am content with my life as it is now, a single woman, aging in place, with writing as a new way of life. That is something that can be done, anytime, anywhere, even in the midst of a pandemic, though I do long for real, not virtual, hugs.

After retirement from a long professional nursing career, during which Loewenhardt *wrote for textbooks and peer-reviewed journals, she turned to writing creative non-fiction. She lives and writes in Ann Arbor.*

5 QUESTIONS FOR Steve Daut



When did you realize that you were a storyteller?

In hindsight, I have been a storyteller since I was very young. I remember when I was an adolescent, my cousin commenting on my crazy stories. In junior high school I wrote a column for the class newspaper that featured humorous stories and have written many more such items since. I have been onstage as a magician, sketch and stand-up comedian, and improv performer, and a number of my plays have been produced. But it wasn't until a trip to The Ark Storytelling Festival seven years ago when my wife said, "You could do that," that I actually started calling myself a storyteller.

What is it that you love about books/stories?

Books and stories make the world a bigger place. The most compelling stories help you see the world in a little different way. They help to put you into the shoes of others, find new perspectives, and appreciate the diversity that life on Earth has to offer. Stories make you more empathetic and tolerant of others.

What inspired you to write *Telling Twain*?

Following something I read from Harlan Ellison years ago, I set a goal to write one million words before I could call myself a writer. I met that goal about 30 years ago, and then quit counting. You can't write that much without being inspired by just about everything. That being said, my current project is writing stories based on inspirational ideas from traditional folk tales. My book, *Telling Twain*, was inspired by my memories of growing up on the Mississippi River and reading Twain stories as a child. I started telling those stories and this inspired me to do more.

What was one of the most surprising things you learned while writing this book?

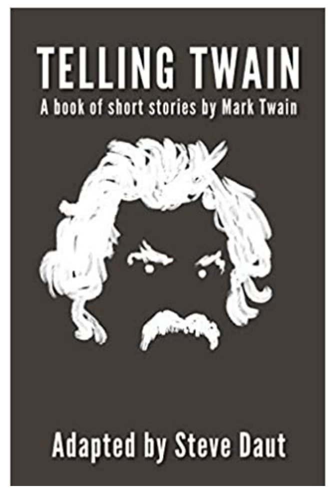
When I revisited some of Mark Twain's stories, I was struck repeatedly by the fact that the themes that Twain wrote about are the same themes we deal with today. *Journalism in Tennessee* is about fake news, *Some Learned Fables for Good Old Boys and Girls* is about fake science. *Running for Governor* is about false accusations and lying politicians. Somehow knowing we have been going through this for years is strangely comforting.



artwork by Caitlyn Muncie

As a child, what did you dream of becoming when you grew up?

My earliest recollection is wanting to be a physician. *LIFE* magazine had a series on the body, and I started a scrapbook filled with body parts (not literally). At one point, I dreamed of being a stage magician, a blackjack dealer, a journalist, an author, a – well, you get the idea. I have been fortunate to do, in a limited way, most of the things I have dreamed about.



Steve Daut is the President of the Ann Arbor Storytellers Guild. Learn more about him by visiting his website at stevedaut.com or listen to his storytelling podcast here.

Purchase a copy of *Telling Twain* through shopcrazywisdom.com.

Watch Steve tell stories on his Youtube channel!

Yoga
Pose of the Week



Archer Pose

By Mohinder Singh

This fantastic posture builds courage! It looks like you are pulling back on a bow and arrow and in a stance of confidence for ready, aim, fire! Charge!!

It's obvious why this pose is also known as Hero Posture. By doing it we feel victorious! It strengthens the legs and engages the 3rd Chakra, our will power center so we can have strength, grit, and courage.

Excerpt about Archer Pose from Kundalini Postures and Poetry, by Shakti Parwha Kaur Khalsa:

> On the physical plane, we have lots of reasons for doing Archer Pose. It helps develop strength in the quadriceps and the intestines. The legs and knees are being strengthened. Outstanding physical stamina and strength are gained, while, remarkably, at the same time, there is an inner posture of feelings taking place that is equal in power to the pure physical connection of feet to the ground.
>
> Sometimes called the Hero Posture, Archer Pose develops the 3rd Chakra, strength of will, and courage. Plus, it is said that the need for excessive sleep disappears! Archer Pose can be challenging, but 11 minutes of archer pose on each side is a simple way to build up the Radiant Body and develop the Navel Center.

Wahlen, 45 years old, has been practicing Kundalini Yoga and Meditation, as taught by Yogi Bhajan, since 2002. He leads Kundalini Yoga, meditation, and gong workshops, trainings and courses. And he has a private massage therapy practice. *[Learn more at his website a2kundaliniyoga.com.]*

From Our Blog

Why Practice Mindfulness?

By Barbara Newell

When Laura Cowan interviewed me for her cover article in the *Crazy Wisdom Community Journal* (*find the full article here)*, we touched on the two main avenues of practice for cultivating mindfulness in everyday life. Ms. Cowan wrote candidly about the parent's classic dilemma: wanting to enjoy the proven benefits of mindfulness in relating with herself, with her loved ones, and all the ups and downs we all encounter in life, yet feeling stretched too thin to add another item to the to-do list. The avenue of finding small ways to be more present right in the midst of what's already happening throughout the day came naturally to the forefront of our interview.

The other avenue is the one commonly referred to as "formal practice." It doesn't have to mean sitting in the lotus position at an altar with incense burning (as lovely as any or all of these things can be). It simply means setting aside some minutes in which we don't do anything else except reconnect, again and again, with our "home base" of mindful presence.

For many people, this home base is following our breathing; others find a different anchor works better for them. In it we give ourselves full permission to let go of our agendas. Every time we notice our mind has wandered off (as human minds are wont to do!), over and over again, we bring the mind back to this home base of spacious, kind presence. It seems so simple—which it is—and yet countless people have found it really makes a difference.

One well-known, busy mom I know made herself a deal one day many years ago now. She vowed that henceforth she would meditate every day—and —she gave herself what she calls the "back door" that it didn't matter for how long. There were times, particularly when her son was quite young, when it was just taking a few conscious breaths and saying the briefest prayer at night, on the edge of her bed, before keeling over; yet her promise to herself made a real difference.

These two avenues to cultivating mindfulness very much support each other. When we take a few dedicated moments to really pause and reconnect with wakeful, caring presence to our own heart, it's much easier throughout the day and week to take the micro-pause in a challenging moment—even a single, mindful breath—that gives us just enough room to check in with ourselves and respond to the situation instead of habitually reacting to it in a way we may regret later.

Read more about making the best of our short windows of opportunity on our blog. You can reach Barbara Newell at barbara@groveemotionalhealth.com.

HIDDEN GEMS

Green Spaces You Might Not Know About, but Need to Explore!

By Annabelle Otto

We're fortunate to live in a city where nature is preserved. Over 200 parks are open to the public in Ann Arbor, and studies have shown that being in nature makes us healthier, more creative, more empathetic, and more likely to pursue active engagement with the world around us. No wonder Gallup Park gets so crowded! If you're looking for a quieter space to immerse yourself in nature, these three hidden gems are exceptional places to unplug.

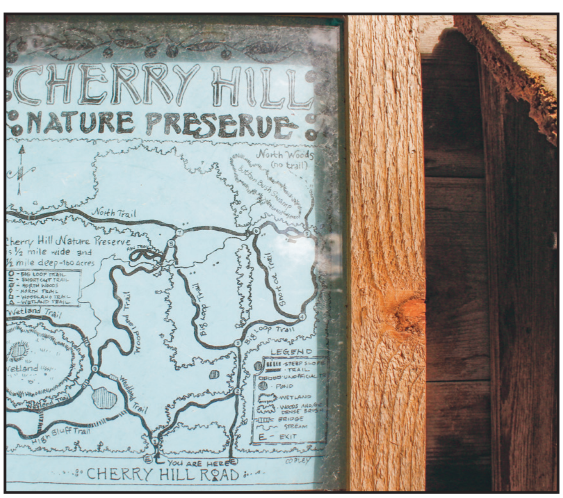
Cherry Hill Nature Preserve

The first place my boyfriend and I explored was the Cherry Hill Nature Preserve. This beautiful preserve features a 1.6-mile loop for people and dogs alike. While there are small sections of wooden boardwalk closer to the Wetland Trail, most of the trails are dirt trails that would make it difficult for handicapped people to traverse. Dogs do need to be leashed when enjoying the trails, and you should be sure to clean up after them, but Cherry Hill provides waste disposal facilities at numerous points along the trail. Humans are not so lucky as to have facilities at Cherry Hill, so empty your bladder beforehand.

Unfortunately, parking at Cherry Hill is almost as nonexistent as facilities. You can only park on the side of the road close to the preserve entrance. A hand-drawn map encased in glass and wood greeted us at the entrance to the trail, and we found more maps dotted throughout the woods. The preserve is 15.5 miles wide and the map showcases one large main trail named the "Big Loop Trail" with a shorter trail, cutting the distance in half, called the "Shortcut Trail," as well as a number of other trails.

A hand-drawn map encased in glass and wood greeted us at the entrance to the trail, and we found more maps dotted throughout the woods.





At first, I was mildly irritated by the noise pollution. We heard cars driving through Dixboro nearby and planes overhead. But the trees do their best to block out the noise, and as we walked deeper into the preserve, most of the clamor faded away, and we became mesmerized by the tall trees that were spread out from each other to allow lots of sunlight through. Although the setting is peaceful, this trail demands some dexterity since the ground is uneven and loose sticks seem to pop up out of nowhere. We ambled through the Shortcut Trail and found ourselves on a dense, winding path that led to a small field where we watched the clouds mosey across the sky.

After that, we decided to go into the woods rather than take the North Trail, which borders the woods. The thicket of tall trees, after having been out in the open for the past half-mile, beckoned us. Near the entrance to the woods, we found a tiny loop called the Ash Trail off to the right. A charming placard at the entrance informs travelers that Boy Scout Troop 243, and specifically a boy named Tyler Allum, was in charge of creating this inviting trail in 2010. The Ash Trail takes you for a lovely stroll around a grove of ash trees. One such tree looked like it had been split in half by lightning (or old age) so that the tree curved downward until the tips met the ground, forming a wondrous arch to walk under. All of the different trail options definitely make for a captivating adventure.



Once we enjoyed the Ash Trail, we hiked through the sunny woods on the Woodland Trail, bending down to watch a spider make a thin web and stopping to listen to the birds. Since this is such a quiet and seemingly obscure spot, I can easily imagine bird watchers spending hours here. After feeling like the only two people on the earth in a beautiful woodland utopia, we crossed paths with a jogger, but she turned up another path, leaving the Wetland Trail clear for us to explore.

A wooden boardwalk took us to a bench where we watched the sun's rays dance over the wetlands. This was a pond encircled by trees, grasses, and reeds. The trail back to the entrance continued to awe us as the terrain expanded and grew into hills filled with many different species of trees. The Wetland Trail meanders around the pond in a U-shape, and if you continue to the left of the wetlands, you'll find yourself on the High Bluff Trail, which offers a more difficult hiking experience. If you're not up for a hilly hike, the Wetland Trail connects back to the Woodland Trail and eases you out of the preserve.

As with most nature preserves, horses are not allowed, and the signage at Cherry Hill was compelled to reiterate that to the public. The preserve is open daily from dawn to dusk. Camping, hunting, ground fires, alcohol and illegal substances, weapons, fireworks, littering and dumping, and unauthorized vehicles are not allowed. These rules have allowed Cherry Hill Nature Preserve to become the sanctuary that it is, a pocket of woodland delight that will leave you with both a sense of peace and adventure.

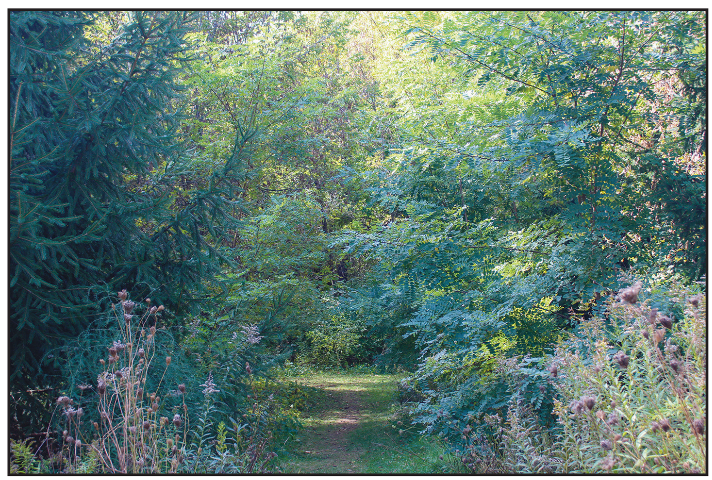
*Cherry Hill Nature Preserve is located at 6375 Cherry Hill Road, Superior Charter Township, MI 48198. You can find directions and information online at, superiortownship.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Cherry-Hill-Nature-Preserve.pd*f

Saginaw Forest

The School for Environment and Sustainability at the University of Michigan is responsible for our next revitalizing outing. Saginaw Forest was a gift to the University of Michigan in 1903 by University Regent Arthur Hill. A map at the trailhead displays the 80-acre parcel of land, and there are similar maps available throughout the woods. Tall grasses greet you as you walk toward a pavilion housing four simple picnic tables, trash and recycling bins.

As we left the pavilion behind, the everyday noises of modern civilization melted away as the birds chimed in. We watched two baby squirrels chase each other up and down a mossy tree. The dirt trail gets a little more difficult here as you enter a slight decline into the woods—watch out for roots, sticks, and fallen branches.

Older trees farther down the trail remind you of the care and preservation of this forest. We were greeted by a collage of green leaves and gray-brown bark, the sunlight giving depth to the scene that looked so much like a painting. Looking down the decline, the path descends deep into the dense forest beyond. Many tree species are planted in groups, like conifers, maples, and deciduous hardwood stands. Another interesting tree here is Murray's Birch. The website for the Saginaw Forest states that, "Saginaw Forest is one of only two known sites in the world of the rare Murray's Birch (Betula murryana), discovered and named by U-M forest ecologist, Burt Barnes." Not only does Saginaw Forest offer grand views, but tiny details of elegance as well, like small flowers with thin petals of washed-out purple and the smell of decomposing logs covered with moist, delicately feathered moss.



This forest functions as a field site for students studying soil, forest, and lake ecologies. Third Sister Lake, a small body of water contained within Saginaw Forest, is the subject of a fascinating study if you're interested in how natural habitats are altered by increasingly urbanized contexts. The chloride in parking lot de-icing salts has resulted in meromixis, which means Third Sister Lake has very little dissolved oxygen—there is scarce life in the water in the form of aquatic animals, the food chain has been ruined by the chloride run off—but that doesn't mean the woods surrounding the lake aren't thriving with life.

We turned right down the trail, which took us to the wetlands. A wooden boardwalk allowed us passage through a forest of reeds taller than we were. Then, the path split into two, the right path ran alongside the border of the forest and around a stand of historic white pines. The path to the left took us to a clearing by Third Sister Lake, a red dragonfly trailing behind us. We soaked up the sunshine by the still lake.

I closed my eyes and thought about how beautiful harmony can be between man and nature. Then I opened my eyes to see the chloride-filled lake and felt remorse. All we can do is fight for healthier spaces and appreciate those moments of harmony we can find.



The rest of our walk was a relaxed stroll through the trees. Another loop presented itself, smaller than the last, only about 300 feet before merging back with the main path. In another 400 feet, there were three trail options: complete the circle around the lake to the left, or take one of the other two paths deeper into the forest. One led almost in a direct line to the service entrance of the forest. The other was a 0.5-mile loop through the thick trees. No matter where you go in this forest, you'll find that the trees breathe life into you.

This trailhead was established as a partnership between the University of Michigan and 2|42 Community Church, and as such, visitors are welcome to use the bathroom and refill water bottles at the 2|42 Community Center, which is open from 8 a.m. - 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. on Sundays. Saginaw Forest is open from dawn to dusk daily. Your dog can come with you on this trip too, however, there are no facilities to dispose of pet waste. You'll have to bring your own leash and poo bags if you want to bring your fuzzy walking buddy! The University of Michigan asks that you do not venture off of the trails. Bicycles are not allowed on or off the trails. Alcohol, fires, camping, and outdoor cooking are banned. There is also no fishing or swimming in Third Sister Lake.

The entrance to the Saginaw Forest trail neighbors 2|42 Community Center, located at 648 South Wagner Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48103, so there's plenty of parking. Learn more about Saginaw Forest online at seas.umich.edu/research/field_research_sites/saginaw_forest.

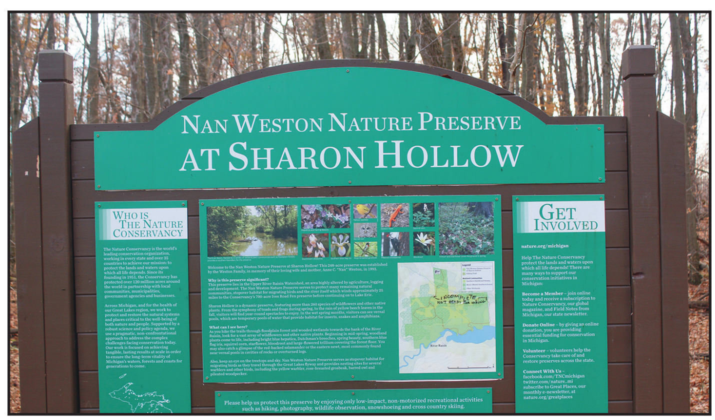
Nan Weston Nature Preserve

My dad was my walking companion for my third expedition. Nan Weston Nature Preserve at Sharon Hollow is a bit of a drive if you live in Ann Arbor, but it's well worth it if you are in desperate need of solitude and quiet.

When we approached the trailhead, there were several signs. One advertised that no pets are allowed on the preserve. Another informed that the property is open to deer hunting in September—January, but only with written consent from the Nature Conservancy. Another sign charmingly offered an audio tour you can download on your phone while you walk. Since I was looking forward to the quiet of Sharon Hollow, I turned down its offer, but I love the idea of getting people more engaged with the history of a natural space by using audio tours and may listen next time I visit.

Sometimes a meticulously polished outdoor space like we have in the city is not what our soul craves. The foot trail led us into the forest where a thick blanket of leaves covered the ground. The crunch beneath my feet made me happy to be in my hometown again. There are no planes or cars here. My dad remarked that he doesn't even hear many animals when he visits, no matter the season. A hunter we met on the trail contradicted him and said the most common animals here are turkeys and deer, though we didn't see any on our hike.

After crossing a small clearing with power lines running above our heads, we found a boardwalk forming a safe path over the creeks that form on the forest floor after a good rain. In the springtime, the creeks become more substantial than they were when my dad and I visited. The boardwalk guided us for about a quarter of a mile before the trail returned to a footpath. The terrain was hilly and plenty of roots grabbed for my feet, but the view of the trees and the peace of being in the moment was overpowering. On top of a small hill, we found the long trail that leads to the River Raisin, which makes a loop of about a half mile before returning to the main path. You can hardly see where the trail diverges at first, but if you want your leisurely walk to last even longer, take this path. You'll see many oddly shaped trees and nooks where you could easily imagine a fairy living. Bright green moss covered fallen logs like carpet. Further on, dark grapevines hung down from high branches, making me feel like I'd entered another world.



Eventually, we made it to the curved bank of the River Raisin. This river streams for almost 139 miles through several southeastern Michigan counties before flowing into Lake Erie. The hike's destination invites you to rest and gaze at the waterway after the mile-long walk. When I came here as a child, strapped with a backpack filled with snacks and water, the hike was an intrepid endeavor where I struggled to keep up with my dad. Returning after so many years, the long, tiresome trek I remembered was almost funny because I realized it's only a mile walk.

But the feeling of whimsy and exploration had not left as I reentered this wondrous place.

Sit down in the clearing by the river and connect to the earth (because there are no picnic tables or benches), maybe even have a snack. The river moves steadily, but it still retains a mirror-like quality, reflecting the trees that stand at the edge of the bank like they're about to dive in as I used to after fishing.



In mid-spring, the preserve boasts of over 260 species of wildflowers and other native plants, like large-flowered trillium, southern blue flag iris, starflower, and Dutchman's breeches. Nan Weston Nature Preserve serves as a stopover habitat for yellow warblers, rose-breasted grosbeaks, barred owls, and pileated woodpeckers. Keep an eye on the preserve's high treetops as spring courses through the forest. The Conservancy is working on expanding the path, soon visitors will be able to walk in a circle back to the parking lot, but for now, walk back the way you came and appreciate the woods all over again.

The trail is marked with diamond-shaped trail markers. Yellow markers also identify the borders of the property. Go farther and you'll be on private property, which is not permitted. The Conservancy also asks that you refrain from using motorized vehicles or bicycles, bringing pets, hunting without a permit, camping, smoking, making a fire, collecting firewood, littering, and removing anything within the preserve.

Nan Weston Nature Preserve at Sharon Hollow is located on Easudes Road in Manchester, MI. You can find out more about this nature preserve by visiting: nature.org/en-us/get-involved/how-to-help/places-we-protect/



What is God Thinking?

By Dan Saferstein

I am not sure what God is thinking with regard to this pandemic crisis. Most of the time I don't even know what other people are thinking. Although I am a psychologist, I am not as good at reading minds as people might think I am. As I get to know people, I can often sense what they are *feeling* by the expressions on their face, but I have never seen God's face—at least not to my knowledge.

I hope I don't offend any of my religious readers by talking about God in such vague terms. I don't want to offend anyone in this essay, but the truth is my relationship with God has been sort of vague to this point. That isn't to say that my relationship isn't a real or meaningful one. For example, it is not unusual for me to talk to God at different points throughout my day, which isn't something that most psychologists probably do. My sense is that a lot of psychologists think of God as a crutch for people who are intellectually unsophisticated. I know this is how my brother-in-law thinks of God. He is a science guy who insists he won't start believing in God until the existence of God can be scientifically proven. I pointed out to him that love can't be scientifically proven either, and yet that doesn't mean that it's not as real as peanut butter.

My guess is that God must be thinking that we need to slow down and reflect on where we are headed as a species and how we intend to treat our planet in the years ahead. I can't imagine that God is very pleased with global warming. As a parent, I know I was never pleased with our kids when they trashed our house and didn't treat it with respect. Granted, God could have come up with a much easier way for us to experience this reflective process, but maybe God doesn't place the same importance on easiness as we do. Maybe God is more like one of those demanding coaches who keep pushing their players to become better teammates and realize their vast potential.

Dan Saferstein, Ph.D is a Licensed Psychologist with a specialty in sport psychology, working with children, adults, coaches, and teams. Read more essays by Dan on his website dansaferstein.com.

What's Up in Our Community

The Crazy Wisdom staff has missed seeing and interacting with many of you during our period of quarantine and we wondered what you were up to—so we asked!!

Lynn Sipher, clinical social worker and mindfulness instructor, has a virtual private psychotherapy practice now in exile from her beloved downtown Ann Arbor office. She is a co-founder of Mindful City Ann Arbor and is passionate about bringing mindfulness practice and events to support community well-being, compassion, and connection. Learn more about working with Sipher on her website.

How are you filling your days?

Like many psychotherapists, I continue to work full-time via phone or video sessions supporting people's healing, growth, and change. Many clients are now struggling with more anxiety as they adapt to life in the midst of coronavirus. Maintaining meaningful work that engages people's strengths and capacities brings deep feelings of gratitude and contentment. I also volunteer for Mindful City Ann Arbor and continue to lead and participate in virtual community mindfulness meditation.

When you find yourself feeling isolated from family, friends and everyday life out in the world, what do you do to feel better?

When I am not working I enjoy being outside and noticing everything "waking up" in this season. I love gardening. I practice mindfulness meditation daily. I do not feel as isolated when I meditate with a group once or twice a week. Even virtual meditation has the benefit of creating a feeling of connectedness. Like many, I am taking long walks as a foundation for well-being. Of course, there are family and friend Zoom sessions. I miss sitting in an audience at the movies or being in any space with others experiencing the arts. I will watch virtual performances and have also explored websites and news articles that offer art—whether tours of artists' studios, new works in this time of sheltering-in-place, or museums that are inviting virtual visits.

What daily habit have you changed that you'd like to keep when this period of quarantine is over?

Talking to my 89 year-old mom.

What is the first thing you want to do that you haven't been able to do once the quarantine is lifted?

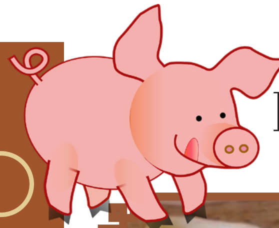
Anything related to being in a shared physical space: with loved ones, with friends, with community. Lots of hugs.

What one guilty pleasure have you indulged in while in quarantine?

Watching *Ozark* on Netflix.



COMFORT FOOD



Pigs in a Blanket



By Angela Madaras

Makes approximately 12 Cabbage Rolls, or as I like to call them "Pigs in a Blanket"

Ingredients:

1 large green cabbage
7-ounce hunk of bread (3 loose cups) torn into small scraps or cooked rice
2/3 cup (approximately 150 ml) whole milk
14 ounces (400 grams) or ground pork sausage
1 small sprig of sage, finely chopped
1 small sprig of rosemary, finely chopped
2 tablespoons grated parmesan
Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
1 28-ounce can peeled plum tomatoes or a jar of tomato sauce
2 tablespoons (30 ml) olive oil
2 cloves garlic, peeled and minced

Prepare cabbage: Bring a large pot of salted water to boil. Discard any messy or broken outer cabbage leaves and carefully peel 12 nice, large leaves. (I think the cabbage can tell if you're in a rush, and will tear more easily. Work carefully. That said, a torn leaf will hardly ruin the dish.) Blanch leaves for about 30 seconds to 1 minute (you can do a few at a time), until wilted, and spread out on towels so that they dry and cool.

Make filling: Place bread scraps or cooked rice in bottom of large bowl and pour milk over. Let sit for a few minutes, then mash it gently with a spoon until something close to a paste forms. Mix with sausage meat, herbs, parmesan, and a pinch or two of salt and black pepper—I find this easiest with a fork or bare hands.

Make the cabbage rolls: Lay your first cabbage leaf on the counter. If it doesn't want to lie flat, pare away some of the thickest stalk (with a paring knife or vegetable peeler) to make it easier. Form some of the filling mixture into a golf ball-sized round. Wrap cabbage leaf around it and pin at the top with a toothpick. Repeat with remaining leaves and mixture.

Make the sauce: To prepare your tomatoes, break them up with your hands (for bigger chunks), or run them through a food mill, or roughly chop them right in the can with scissors. In a heavy sauté pan with a lid or a medium (5 to 6-quart) Dutch oven, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add the garlic and sauté for about 30 seconds (just until golden, not a moment longer) then add the tomatoes, bringing the sauce to a gentle boil. Season with salt if needed. Add cabbage packages, arranging them carefully in the pan so they all fit, and cover the pot and gently simmer them for 25 minutes. Remove the toothpicks and carefully turn the rolls over, cooking them for another 25 minutes.

Remove the lid and simmer for another ten minutes to cook off some of the wetness. They're all cooked now, but if you can rest them for another 15 minutes before eating, the flavors settle in and they become even better. Serve with sauerkraut slightly warmed.



Cabbage roll filling before being rolled up.



Cabbage rolls with sauce, before being baked.

The Crazy Wisdom weekly Calendar

Online Workshops

Sufi class with Imam Kamau Ayubbi • May 26 • 6:30 p.m. For more information visit Interfaithspirit.org or call (734) 327-0270.

Sacred Body Circles with Leslie Blackburn • May 28 • 7 p.m. Join me and a community of people like you that are ready to feel more joy and pleasure in your life, to feel aligned in your soul purpose, and to take action to support creating the new paradigm we wish to be in together. (Monthly, 4th Thursdays in 2020) For more information visit Leslieblackburn.com.

Mindfulness in Uncertain Times with Barbara Newell • May 31 • 2 p.m. In 8 one-hour sessions, this live course (held on Zoom) will provide practical support for developing a daily meditation practice that's appropriate for you, cultivating basic mindfulness skills, and applying those skills in meeting life's challenges—to respond wisely instead of reacting impulsively.

Each class will include instruction, a guided practice exercise, and Q&A - all live and responsive to the challenges as well as possibilities inherent in living amid uncertain times. For more information and registration visit barbaranewell.com.

Socializing Responsibly

Tea with Your Peeps! • May 24 • 2 p.m. An informal online gathering with some of the crew of Evenstar's Chalice, The Intentional Living Collective, Sophia Unfolds, and YOU! Zoom: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85709418486 Questions? Contact Mara Evenstar at Mara@evenstarschalice.com.

Sound Bath Meditation

Settle in:Sound Bath Meditation • May 28 • 7 p.m. • Join Licensed Sound Therapist, Rob Meyer-Kukan, for this sound bath meditation. The concept of the new normal is not all that new. Is it? In light of the coronavirus pandemic, we are now confronted with addressing the new normal. How are you processing the new normal? This will be your time to meditate, to relax, to breathe, and to settle into a comfortable, relaxing, and peaceful place. Singing bowls, chimes, shruti box, gong, and more will accompany you on the journey! This Facebook Live will take place in the feed of Meyer-Kukan's Facebook page.



Virtual Meditation, Yoga, and Martial Arts

Guided Meditation: Unity in Hope • May 22 • 6:30 p.m. • Experience Max Meditation System™ - a practice of guided meditation from the lineage of King Salomon. Relax your body, calm your mind, and strengthen peace, resilience, and hope in your life and in our world! For more information contact Jonathan G. Itchon at jonathangitchon@gmail.com.

Zazen—Japanese Zen Meditation online • May 24 • 11 a.m. • Meditate with a group of Zen practitioners from the comfort of your own home. Instructions available prior to the sitting by request. Noon service and informal check-in after the 40 minute sitting. Zoom link via phone or computer. For more information, and the Zoom link, contact Marta Dabis at JissoJiZen@gmail.com.

Realization Process • May 26 • 6 p.m. • This is a weekly exploration and practice of the Realization Process developed by Judith Blackstone, Ph.D. "Realization Process ™ is a body-centered approach to personal and spiritual healing and maturity. It initiates the process of spiritual realization with psychological and relational healing, and embodiment."

Beginners and drop-ins welcome! These sessions are offered on a donation basis and facilitated by Mara Evenstar who is certified to teach the Subtle Self (psychological) and Embodiment portions of this work. Email susan.billmaier@gmail.com or Mara Evenstar at info@evenstarschalice.com for more information, and/or to be put on the emailing list used for communications about these sessions.

Online: Shamanic Sound Journey with Tammy Doublin • May 29 • 7 p.m. Join us for an evening of trauma release and soul retrieval through a Shamanic Journey with Intuitive Energy Healer and Shamanic Practitioner Tammy Doublin. We will be holding this experience on Zoom and Tammy will be offering this Journey from our Evenstar's Chalice We-Space!

Please have a yoga mat, pillow, and/or blanket for your comfort. It is recommended that you are well-hydrated and eat light or even fast before the ceremony, however fasting is not required.

As a world traveler, mystic and adventurer, Doublin has developed the ability to hold space for others to awaken to their true Divine Essence. Facilitating healing on a cellular level encompassing the mind, body, and spirit. Diving deep to uncover, excavate, and retrieve parts of the soul.

To protect our sacred work, the "doors" to this event will be closed by 7:10, so please arrive on time. Contact Mara Evenstar at info@evenstarschalice.com for more information.

Virtual Retreats

Chekawa's Seven Point Mind Training • May 23 • 10 a.m. •
The basis for experiencing happiness and suffering lies in our own mind. Ironically, being solely concerned with one's own happiness actually leads to dissatisfaction and many other forms of mental pain and discomfort. The Seven Point Mind training offers methods to transition from a habitual perspective of self-centeredness to one that cherishes others more than oneself. Demo Rinpoche will guide us through the practice over the Memorial Day weekend. Zoom online only program. Visit the Jewel Heart website for more information.

Crazy Wisdom Weekly Calendar Submissions

If you have a virtual event that you'd like us to publicize in our *Crazy Wisdom Weekly* e-zine, which comes out every Friday morning, please let us know. The deadline for listings is Monday morning at 10am.

For full details on virtual listings please visit our website.

Please submit your calendar listing through this Google form for the Weekly.





Shannon Lee singing with her band, Shannon Lee and the The Silver Linings. She also sings with The Rhythm Machines Project.

Tarot Card
of the week



The Star Card
from the *Wild Unknown Tarot*

Keywords: hope, peace of mind, generosity

It is the light at the end of the tunnel, the emergence from the darkness, the beacon or symbol of hope.

Sailors have traditionally navigated by the stars so it's something to aim for, something to guide us. Stars are good omens, something that mark something special, often changes in the stars herald great events or good things coming. Stars are also something that we wish on, magical things that symbolize dreams, even if they are far away.

You can purchase the *Wild Unknown Tarot* deck through Crazy Wisdom's online shop.

Click here to purchase a copy of *The Wild Unknown Tarot*.

Shannon Lee Music

Detroit native Shannon Lee captivates her audiences with her heart-spun music celebrating everything from heart-ache and loss to social and political issues. With her soothing contralto voice and easy strumming on her acoustic guitar, Shannon Lee delivers a sound that is both familiar and rootsy in it's Americana underpinnings, yet unique and unlike anyone you've ever heard before.

Shannon Lee didn't pick up a guitar until the age of 38, and didn't get too serious about it until age 41. She wrote her first song at the age of 41, too. Lee joined her first band as a back up singer at age 38. She's been in several bands since, either singing back up harmony, or lead. Lee just released her first ever album last year, called *Wake Up*.

Learn more about Shannon Lee on her website page.

Choose to Live

your life as fully and Lovingly as possible. After all, if you truly sink into this moment, what else is there to do…we are the Unknown hurling through space-time, not knowing how we got here, where we are going, but we somehow EXIST

- Brenda Morgan Ph.D
movedbythelight.com

artwork by Sara Tea
See more of her work online at Saratea.com